

MOTIVATION AND MORALE

By

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There are three aspects of motivation that can move groups as well as individuals. These are:

- A. Suggestion
- B. Sentiments
- C. Logical Appeals

Suggestion

Suppose you tell your employees, "Don't throw your trash behind the work benches." They may never have thought of the benches as a good place to get rid of trash, but now they know.

Instead, you should have said, "Put the trash in the containers provided." This lets the employee find the other place on his own. He is more liable to follow your suggestion. Positive commands are better than negative ones.

Other suggestion techniques are:

- a. age - more likely to believe an older person than a younger one.
- b. rank - high ranking man is more likely to get away with it.
- c. stature - have a desk, act important.
- d. number - if you can get the majority of the members the others will probably follow.
- e. printed word - "It's down here in black and white."

These are techniques and should not be taken as recommendations. They can be used to obtain good results but they may also do the reverse. Suggestion should be used as an aid because it is temporary and unstable. It can be used to strengthen logical appeals, but used alone it is a danger.

Sentiments

Sentiments are defined as structures or organizations of emotions around ideas, people or objects which tend to predispose us in favor or against the idea, person or object.

An example of this is a person in a new job. He is usually willing to move around. As he becomes more settled in his job, he is less likely to want or desire to move. The consequences of moving (affecting relatives, housing, schooling, and everything else he is involved in) offer resistance to change.

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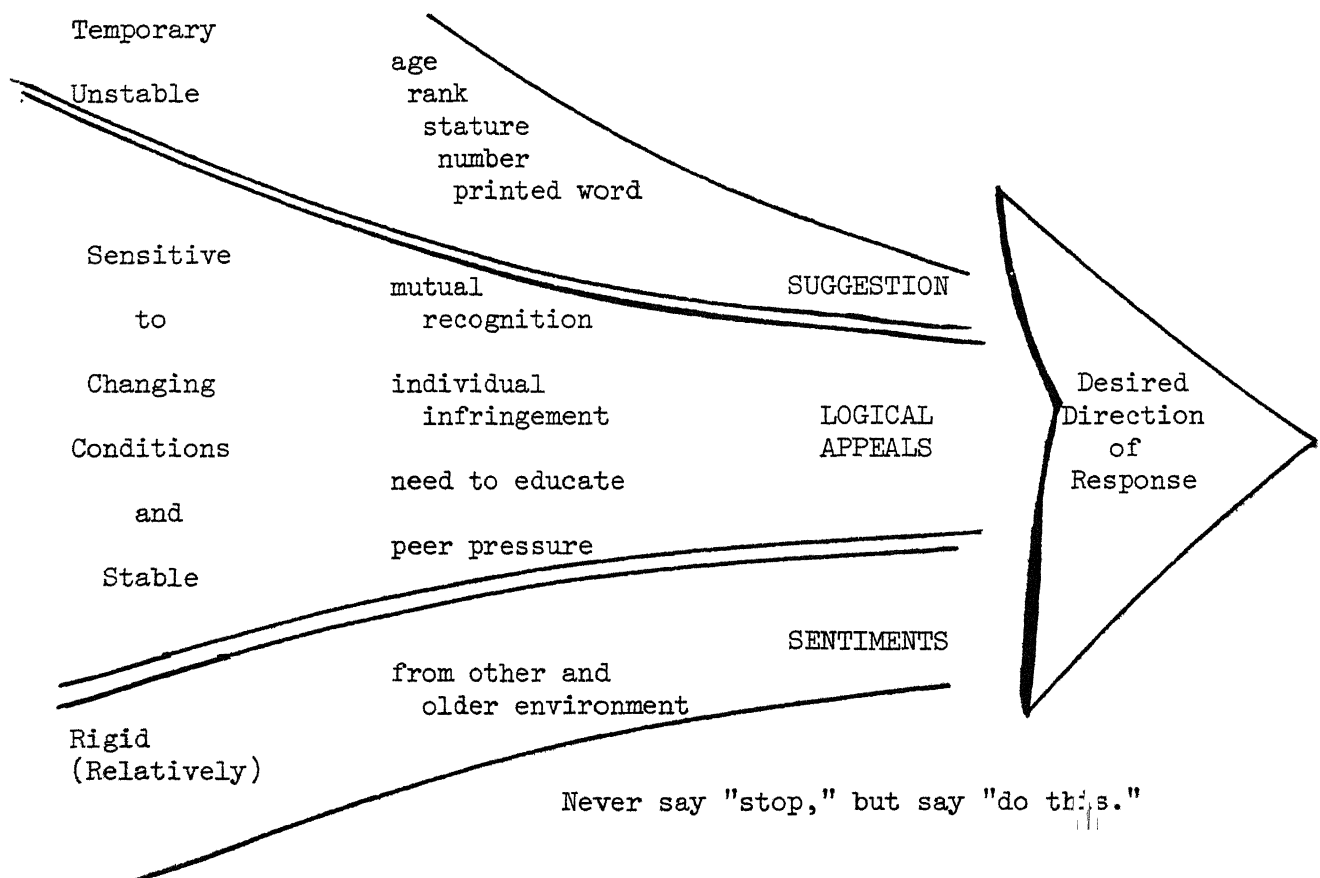
Sentiments are great for stability but are bad for change. They are rigid and are the chief obstacle to change.

Logical Appeals

Logical appeals are sensitive to changing conditions are are stable.

- a. mutual recognition
 1. Both parties realize what the group or individual is supposed to do.
 2. Most people do what they are told.
 3. Tell your subordinates what is expected and why.
- b. individual infringement
 1. Some individuals will not go along with the group.
 2. Don't punish the group.
 3. Take the individual aside to find out the reason for his unfavorable performance.
- c. need to educate
 1. Taking the person aside from the group doesn't hurt group performance.
 2. Ask "Why?"
 3. Educating the person and finding out the facts can put the person back into the group.

All three of these main factors must be taken into effect in order to move the group in the desired direction, as the following diagram by Hughs shows.



Some additional motivating factors are:

- a. recognition and appreciation
- b. achievement
- c. salary
- d. advancement
- e. responsibility
- f. work itself
- g. interpersonal relationships
- h. technical supervision

The manager should not always look for increased productivity as a measure of performance. For example, studies have shown that job enlargement does not increase productivity substantially but it does substantially improve absenteeism and employee turnover. The manager should be aware of other motivational results besides productivity.

The techniques for motivating people are about as numerous as the number of individuals. The factors which were covered are far from being inclusive. The manager needs to know his people to motivate them.

The Nature of Morale

Webster defines morale as "the mental and emotional attitudes of an individual to the functions and tasks expected of him by his group and loyalty to it."

Some factors which influence morale are:

1. Work situation
 - a. lighting
 - b. safety programs
 - c. working hours
 - d. tools and equipment
 - e. attractiveness of the building
 - f. smoking privileges
 - g. music on the job
 - h. type of work
2. Health situation
 - a. sanitary facilities
 - b. individual's health
 - c. rest periods
 - d. type of lunch room
3. Top management's attitude toward employees
 - a. the boss
 - b. local business status
 - c. what happens to employee suggestions
 - d. distribution of duties
 - e. square deal on grievances
 - f. training
 - g. employee credit union

4. Rewards
 - a. wages
 - b. wage setting plan
5. Personal situation
 - a. personality differences between people
 - b. previous experiences of the individual
 - c. employee's outside contacts
 - d. personal counseling
 - e. job security
 - f. housing facilities

For our purpose of increasing our understanding of morale from a leadership point of view, we should notice that this definition implies that both personal and group aspects are involved in the state of mind called morale.

Some General Characteristics of Morale

1. It can be something peculiar to an individual, or small groups, or over-all groups (organization-wide).
2. It can change overnight.
3. It doesn't depend on technical knowledge or skill.
4. It is described in terms of feelings and attitudes.

In a work situation many of these factors (and others that could be listed) are controlled or influenced by the manager. The manager is, therefore, in a position to raise or lower the morale of his employees.

What specifically do employees want?

Job satisfaction surveys have shown that employees with high morale expressed satisfaction with regard to the following specific items:

- a. a supervisor that listens
- b. the prospects of a satisfactory future
- c. a supervisor that knows the employee's qualifications and progress
- d. the recognition of and credit for employees constructive suggestions
- e. friendly and helpful criticism and evaluation of work
- f. pay increases when deserved
- g. recognition and praise for satisfactory work
- h. selection of best-qualified employee for promotion when vacancies arise
- i. fair amount of work assigned employee
- j. pay at least as high as the going rate for the same type of work elsewhere

- k. freedom to seek help when difficult problems arise in work
- l. freedom from unjust reprimand
- m. satisfactory daily working hours
- n. a vacation policy comparable to those in other firms

The items that fill psychological needs are in general higher than those that fill purely material needs.

Key Group Morale Factors

From the standpoint of the group, five factors of morale seem to stand out; namely:

- a. mutual treatment
- b. involvement
- c. goal attainment
- d. be onesself
- e. good leadership

Mutual Treatment

When everyone in similar positions are treated alike, morale tends to be high. Soldiers in battle will tolerate unbelievable hardship and yet maintain high morale as long as they believe they are being treated fairly.

This does not mean that all employees are alike and should be treated alike. It does mean, however, that when dealing with a group of employees, the leader can maintain morale by being fair. He should explain the necessity for taking certain action, changing policies, insisting on new standards. The level of morale is maintained if the group can see that the change affects them equally and is fair.

Involvement

"Come on, join in the fun!" There is something about joining in that is satisfying to the individual. If one thinks of the times when his own morale has been highest, it was probably during some very stimulating group activity or involvement.

In group participation, one can:

- a. find security--"all for one, one for all"
- b. exert influence--"I'm doing my share"
- c. belong--"This is our project"
- d. achieve recognition--"I helped"
- e. find opportunity--"I'm doing something constructive"

The wise leader encourages involvement because it builds morale throughout the group for which he is responsible. He achieves high personal morale by helping the group build morale.

Goal Attainment

Morale remains high when joint effort achieves definite progress. Low morale is expressed in the statement, "We're not getting anywhere."

A sense of achievement is something we all desire. Raises, promotions, and diplomas many times mean more to us as symbols of progress than their inherent value would indicate.

The leader who wants to build morale keeps his people informed of individual and group progress, rewards outstanding effort, gives credit for help toward sometimes unseen goals, and generally conveys the idea that "we're getting somewhere toward attaining our goal."

Be Oneself

Although each person has many reasons why he wants to be a participating member of a group, he also at times wants to "be oneself" - to be different - to be a nonconformist. People working together under conditions of high morale have this opportunity and freedom.

In free situations men get to know each other and to understand their differences. Lack of this understanding makes for critical and intolerant attitudes. Petty bickering over minor differences shows intolerance. This in turn may cause restrictions which affect the freedom to know others--to become tolerant. It is a vicious circle which the knowing leader will take steps to avoid.

Type of Leader

Of all the key factors which influence morale, by far the most important is the type of leader. Cases can be cited where morale has been unusually low in situations where every desirable morale factor was apparently present except one - good leadership. Cases can also be cited where morale has been unbelievably high despite a situation where almost every desirable morale factor was absent except one - good leadership.

Continual Testing of Morale Necessary

We have seen that morale has many aspects. It is such an important operating factor that the leader should be continually testing the level of morale within his group and then use his influence to raise it where it has dropped or to maintain it where it is high. This means that the leader must be able to find out what the true level of morale is within his group at any time. What test can be used to determine the level of morale?

Conventional tests of morale are not always accurate. For example, laughing and joking among employees is often considered by some as a sure sign of high morale. Usually, of course, it is a good sign - but not always. Occasionally, laughing and joking indicate that the members of the group have given up trying to accomplish their real objective and are just "horsing around" as a diversion to cover up their loss of interest.

There is a simple test of the level of morale which is not subject to such errors and which every leader should have in his "kit of tools." It can be stated like this:

Low Morale

Apathy - loss of goal interest

Resignation - obstacles regarded as insurmountable

High Morale

Determination - to attain goals

Resistance - to succumbing frustration

Thus when the leader finds his group is apathetic or resigned, when they have become disinterested in moving ahead, or when they have "given up," he knows that despite other signs which may seem favorable, he is facing a serious problem of low morale. Conversely, though some signs from his group may seem unfavorable, if he can see determination to succeed and efforts to resist frustration, his group is not suffering from low morale.

The manager must realize that many factors influence employee motivation and morale. He must be constantly aware of new methods or ways to increase morale and use motivational techniques. The manager should not try everything that he hears, but he should know his group well enough to predict if something might work.